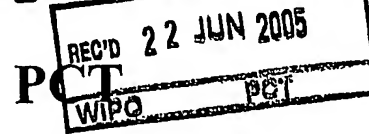


Rec'd PCT/PTO 03 JAN 2006

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY 10/563349

From the  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

To:  
ROBET W. PITTS  
PO BOX 11483  
WINSTON-SALEM, NC 27116-1483



WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Applicant's or agent's file reference		Date of mailing (day/month/year)
04013		20 JUN 2005
FOR FURTHER ACTION See paragraph 2 below		
International application No.	International filing date (day/month/year)	Priority date (day/month/year)
PCT/US04/19042	14 June 2004 (14.06.2004)	03 July 2003 (03.07.2003)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC		
IPC(7): B63B 21/04 and US Cl.: 114/253		
Applicant		
ADVANCED MARINE SUPPORT TECHNOLOGY, INC.		

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- ☐ Box No. II Priority
- ☐ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☐ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☒ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/ US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (703)305-3230	Authorized officer Lars Olson Telephone No. (571) 272-6685
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Form PCT/ISA/237 (cover sheet) (January 2004)

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/US04/19042

Box No. I Basis of this opinion

1. With regard to the language, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

- ☐ This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language \_\_\_\_\_, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).

2. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:

a. type of material

- ☐ a sequence listing  
☐ table(s) related to the sequence listing

b. format of material

- ☐ in written format  
☐ in computer readable form

c. time of filing/furnishing

- ☐ contained in international application as filed.  
☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.  
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.

3. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.

4. Additional comments:

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.  
PCT/US04/19042

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43 bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims <u>1-25, 29, 30, 32-34</u>	YES
	Claims <u>26-28, 31, 35-37</u>	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims <u>1-25, 29, 30, 32-34</u>	YES
	Claims <u>26-28, 31, 35-37</u>	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims <u>1-37</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO

2. Citations and explanations:

Claims 26-28, 31 and 35-37 lack novelty under PCT Article 33(2) as being anticipated by Axelsson (US 6,178,914). Axelsson discloses the same marine handling craft as claimed, as shown in Figures 1-8, that is useable with a primary platform or ship, and is deployable so as to capture an object or supply vessel, where said marine handling craft is tethered to said ship and attachable to said ship, and said supply vessel can be mated and docked with said marine handling craft.

Claims 1-25, 29, 30 and 32-34 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3), because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest the use of a marine handling craft that includes a track that extends above a compartment into which a marine payload can enter, and at least one attachment block that is capable of traveling along said track and is attachable to a tether.

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.

PCT/US04/19042

**Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application**

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the questions whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:

Claim 27 is presented in dependent form, depending from claim 701, when it should depend from claim 26.